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TOT: 140557Z JAN 89

BRIEF  
TO: IMMEDIATE ROUTINE MEA BRIEF.

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST BRIEF

FOR 14 JANUARY 1989.

FROM: DDI/O/CPAS.

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1. USSR-AFGHANISTAN: SHEVARDNADZE AGAIN VISITING KABUL

SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER SHEVARDNADZE'S VISIT TO KABUL--HE ARRIVED YESTERDAY--PROBABLY IS INTENDED TO COORDINATE WITH AFGHAN PRESIDENT NAJIBULLAH THE FINAL PHASE OF THE SOVIET TROOP WITHDRAWAL. X

SHEVARDNADZE WENT TO KABUL A YEAR AGO, BEFORE MOSCOW'S 8 FEBRUARY STATEMENT ANNOUNCING ITS PLANS TO WITHDRAW; HE WAS THERE AGAIN IN AUGUST AS THE FIRST PHASE OF THE WITHDRAWAL WAS NEARING ITS COMPLETION. MEANWHILE, SOVIET DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER SHABANOV DECLARED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW YESTERDAY THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD HONOR THEIR COMMITMENT UNDER THE GENEVA ACCORDS TO BE OUT OF AFGHANISTAN BY 15 FEBRUARY. SHABANOV

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SAID THE SECOND STAGE OF THE WITHDRAWAL WOULD START SOON.

SHEVARDNADZE'S TRIP PROBABLY IS ALSO INTENDED TO DEMONSTRATE MOSCOW'S CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR ITS CLIENT IN KABUL, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE FAILED NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE RESISTANCE IN ISLAMABAD LAST WEEK AND AS SOVIET TROOPS WITHDRAW. BUT, WHILE BUCKING UP REGIME MORALE FOR THE HARD DAYS AHEAD, HE ALMOST CERTAINLY IS CAUTIONING NAJIBULLAH AND THE RULING PARTY THAT FACTIONAL INFIGHTING WOULD THREATEN THE REGIME'S REMAINING HOLD ON POWER.

THE SOVIETS PRESUMABLY HAVE FEW ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE CHANCES FOR A FAVORABLE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT AT THIS LATE DATE BUT, WITH KABUL, MIGHT TRY ONE MORE POLITICAL GAMBIT TO ENTICE THE RESISTANCE BACK TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE OR, FAILING THAT, TO SEIZE THE PROPAGANDA HIGH GROUND FOR THE FINAL WEEKS. IN HIS TALKS WITH THE PAKISTANIS AND THE INSURGENTS LAST WEEK, FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER VORONTSOV SHOWED GREAT INTEREST IN THE CREATION OF AN AFGHAN CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL OR SHURA--TO INCLUDE "GOOD MUSLIMS" FROM THE REGIME--AS A MEANS TO ESTABLISH A FOLLOW-ON GOVERNMENT. THE SOVIETS AND KABUL MAY OFFER A LIST OF CANDIDATES FOR SUCH A MEETING.

IT IS LESS LIKELY THAT MOSCOW AND KABUL WOULD ANNOUNCE A GOVERNMENT RESHUFFLE THAT WOULD FURTHER DIMINISH THE RULING PARTY'S PRESENCE AND RENAME IT, AS HAS BEEN RUMORED IN KABUL, OR OFFER NAJIBULLAH'S RESIGNATION. THE RESISTANCE HAS REJECTED SUCH OFFERS AS DISINGENUOUS AND WOULD DO SO AGAIN. AND MOSCOW AND KABUL WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE CONCERNED THAT SUCH MOVES MIGHT FURTHER DAMAGE PARTY UNITY AND MORALE.

SHABANOV'S COMMENTS MAY SIGNAL AN END TO THE PRESS BLACKOUT THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN MAINTAINING ON THEIR WITHDRAWAL ACTIVITIES. POLITICAL SPOKESMEN LIKE VORONTSOV, HOWEVER, MAY CONTINUE TO THREATEN NONADHERENCE TO THE GENEVA ACCORDS IN LAST-DITCH ATTEMPTS TO PUSH PAKISTAN AND THE RESISTANCE INTO A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT.

## 2. AFGHANISTAN: RESISTANCE SETS SHURA DATE

ALLIANCE MEMBERS HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT TO HOLD THEIR LONG-POSTPONED SHURA (CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL) ON 1 FEBRUARY. THE SHURA IS BEING HELD TO ESTABLISH A SUPREME COUNCIL AND A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT. THE AGREEMENT REAFFIRMED THAT "GOOD MUSLIMS" FROM THE KABUL REGIME CAN BE INCLUDED IN THE SHURA, BUT IT DID NOT PROVIDE ANY METHOD FOR INVOLVING THEM. THE EIGHT TEHRAN-BASED SHIA GROUPS HAVE REFUSED TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT BECAUSE THEY WERE OFFERED ONLY 12 PERCENT OF THE 480 SEATS IN THE SHURA--WELL BELOW THE 25 PERCENT THEY DEMANDED. AN ALLIANCE DELEGATION THAT LEFT FOR TEHRAN YESTERDAY WILL MEET WITH IRANIAN OFFICIALS AND AFGHAN SHIAS TO DISCUSS SHIA REPRESENTATION IN THE SHURA. ALLIANCE SPOKESMAN MOJADEDI HAS ANNOUNCED THAT HALF THE SEATS WOULD BE ALLOCATED TO INSURGENT FIELD COMMANDERS.

MANY CONTENTIOUS ISSUES REMAIN TO BE SOLVED, INCLUDING WHERE TO HOLD THE SHURA AND WHETHER FORMER KING ZAHIR SHAH IS TO HAVE A ROLE IN THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT. SEVERAL ALLIANCE MEMBERS HAD OPPOSED GIVING THE SHIAS EVEN AS MANY SEATS AS THEY GOT AND ARE UNLIKELY TO OFFER THEM MORE. PAKISTAN, WHICH IS INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT ITS DIMINISHING INFLUENCE WITH THE INSURGENTS, WILL BE ENCOURAGED THAT PROSPECTS FOR CONVENING THE SHURA ARE IMPROVING.

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AND WITH THEM ITS CHANCES FOR INFLUENCE IN AFGHANISTAN AFTER THE KABUL REGIME FALLS.

3. INTERNATIONAL: PAYMENTS TO IMF LAGGING

OVERDUE PAYMENTS TO THE IMF FROM MEMBER COUNTRIES CONTINUE TO MOUNT. AS OF 1 DECEMBER, TOTAL ARREARS TO THE IMF HAD REACHED A RECORD \$3.5 BILLION, UP \$1 BILLION FROM THE LEVEL IN 1987. OF THE 20 COUNTRIES OVERDUE, 13 WERE DELINQUENT BY MORE THAN A MONTH. EIGHT OF THEM ACCOUNT FOR ABOUT 90 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL OVERDUE AND HAVE BEEN DECLARED INELIGIBLE BY THE IMF FOR ADDITIONAL LOANS--GUYANA, LIBERIA, PERU, SIERRA LEONE, SOMALIA, SUDAN, VIETNAM, AND ZAMBIA.

DELINQUENT PAYMENTS TO THE IMF ARE BECOMING MORE FREQUENT, AND ABOUT HALF THE APPROXIMATELY 125 COUNTRIES THAT BORROW FROM THE FUND EXPERIENCED SOME DELAY LAST YEAR. IF THIS SITUATION CONTINUES, IT WILL WEAKEN THE FUND'S FINANCIAL BASE AND UNDERMINE ITS KEY ROLE IN THE THIRD WORLD DEBT STRATEGY.

4. IN BRIEF

MIDDLE EAST

X--ARAB LEAGUE MEETING IN TUNISIA DEALT BRIEFLY WITH LEBANON, SET UP COMMITTEE TO CONTACT LEBANESE PARTIES . . . FOCUSED ON PALESTINIAN UPRISING IN ISRAELI-HELD TERRITORY . . . PROMISED MORE MONEY AND STRONG INTERNATIONAL LOBBYING FOR PALESTINIANS.

X--CAR BOMB EXPLODED YESTERDAY IN BEIRUT'S SOUTHERN SUBURBS DURING HIZBALLAH-SPONSORED PROTEST OF INTRA-SHIA FIGHTING IN LEBANON X. . . PRESS SAYS TWO SHIA CLERICS AMONG CASUALTIES . . . FUNDAMENTALISTS PROBABLY WILL ACCUSE AMAL DESPITE ITS DISAVOWAL.

EUROPE

X--PRIME MINISTER THATCHER HAS ANNOUNCED MEASURES BEING TAKEN AGAINST BRITISH FIRMS SUPPLYING EQUIPMENT FOR LIBYA'S RABTA COMPLEX X. . . LENDS SUPPORT TO US CALLS FOR CUTOFF OF FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT X. . . LONDON REITERATING DESIRE FOR NONMILITARY ACTION.

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